



American Girl Fashion Show Committee Minutes
Meeting, February 23, 2015
Tala, Loudonville, NY, 1:30 PM.

Members present: Danielle Holley, Tabitha Novosat, Sarah O'Brien, Karen Clark, Jasmine Clemons, Carol Crummey, Barbara Gaffuri, Caitlin Monjeau

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM. The agenda was not changed.

The committee briefly reviewed the event's finances. After the closure of the model call, the model fees were included in the budget figures, and the show came very close to breaking even. With the added expenditure for show merchandise, we will appear to be in the red for a little while. Total receipts for ticket sales approach \$15k, and total receipts for all income sources approach \$17k. We had unbudgeted expenditures for the community project because 5, rather than 3 girls were offered to us. Some individuals have expressed interest in funding part of this project. The committee will reach out to one member in particular who expressed an interest.

Regarding advertising, complimentary tickets were offered to the Mamatoga Blogger, Jennifer Gish of the Times Union, and Suzy of B95.5. The blogger eagerly accepted the tickets and stated that she planned to write about the event on her blog. Ms. Gish said she could not attend but would put us in touch with Times Union reporters who might write about the event. Carol Crummey is following up. We have had no response from Suzy. This approach may be a good one as it pays off years later and helps promote the event to new audiences, and costs relatively little when compared with traditional media advertising.

Invitations have been sent, and we have heard from some that they have received their invitations. There was a problem with some of the addresses, although we do not know how many. All of the addresses are correct, but some addressee names have been listed with the incorrect address. The issue appears limited to the postcard invitations, which will mean that the recipients will see the advertisement either way. We are still researching this problem, which may take some hours to solve.

Facebook ads continue to pay off in terms of new visitors to our website and new potential purchasers, and the committee agrees that Facebook advertising is a good strategy going forward.

Ticket sales remain strong, and are ahead of last year's sales at the same time, remembering that the event is two weeks later this year, and therefore we are more like two weeks ahead. Looking at last



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year's numbers, there was a significant jump in ticket sales as invitations were received, and as winter break began, so it seems likely that ticket sales will pick up in the next few weeks. 2:00 PM sales are very strong and that show will likely sell out and do so first. We expect that the other shows will fill in as the 2:00 PM show fills. The 5:30 show still lags, even compared with last year.

We discussed a plan to boost 5:30 sales, but the committee did not have a strong feeling that promoting that show at this point would drive more attendance at that show, as the issue may be that the time is simply too late in the day for some young children.

We offered an incentive for Rumors customers who use the code RUMORS when they buy tickets online—they will receive American Girl friendship bracelets that we found in the storage space, while supplies last. This is a good incentive, as it is inexpensive for us, and helps foster the relationship with Rumors and their clients.

Full table sales have been good, and we would like to see more of these sales promoted next year.

The committee discussed helping to make sure our member volunteers treat our guests like potential donors and members, and also helping to manage issues that arise on the day of the event. Instead of spending money on identifiers this year, the committee will ask that volunteers wear black as before, but wear a scarf of any color (with the suggestion that American Girl colors be considered) to distinguish ourselves on the day of the show.

The program can be printed just a few days before the event, so the deadline to get the program to the printer is tentatively set for 3/13, a Friday. We would like to see more ad space taken if possible. There are optional American Girl display items that can be printed, at a cost, to put on raffle and merchandise tables. The committee opted against doing this this year, but will consider for next year as part of an entire printing quote.

The event logistics team has designed new centerpieces for the show this year, which look very nice, and will need a Done in a Day to help put these together, along with the girl-sized American Girl box we'd like to have at the event. This event will also serve as the staging ground for the raffle assembly, and will take place on Saturday 3/14. CJM will get the ball rolling on that.

The pre-sale is complete for merchandise, and a discussion was held concerning how much to order this year, as the wholesale prices are high for merchandise, and the items are not returnable. American Girl has traditionally changed the doll merchandise only every other year, so what we order this year could be reused. The committee chairs have a strong preference for ordering



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modestly to avoid cost overruns this year. After discussion, the committee agreed to order shirts in the following quantities:

XS: 20

S: 40

M: 40

L: 20

XL: 20

CJM will order the remaining items based upon pre-sale orders and using some discretion.

The committee discussed the candy bar, and the fact that we should have somewhere in the range of 200-250 pounds of candy to serve all guests at all shows. We had some limited success buying after-Valentine's sale candy, but we likely do not have enough for an entire display. The committee agreed that the 10:30 show likely did not need a candy bar, given the time of day, and that we would try to have the bar up for the 2:00 and 5:30 PM shows. We also agreed to investigate buying candy from BJ's, Sam's Club, or similar venues to maximize value.

Previous year merchandise was sold with some success at the mall table events, although some will be used as gifts for models. The expense of ordering merchandise for models remains an issue, as the shirts run to \$10 wholesale. The committee discussed perhaps offering models a chance to buy a shirt at cost for \$10 in future years. CJM will investigate having shirts printed as well. Whatever is leftover will be packaged as raffle items.

Jasmine Clemons agreed to try to get in touch with the AJLI boutique contact about ordering some limited quantities and items to sell to members. CJM will follow up.

On the day of the event, every committee member should be trained to help with Paypal Here purchases and pricing. CJM will coordinate. The committee also will take care to reconcile purchases at the end of each show and carefully track how sales went after each session.

Raffles subcommittee reports very few donations so far, with a goal of 10 per show, or 30 in all. CJM will coordinate with Julia and BOD to work out how we got members to donate last year.

Regarding the community project, CJM has contacted Today's Limousine to see about transportation for the girl guests of the community project. Will follow up.



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Girl of the Capital Region is live, and one application has been received. The committee would like to see at least 5 this year. We will email the Girl Scouts to help promote this and also feature more prominently on the JLA Facebook page.

The committee is current with the tasks-by-month list, and will now begin bi-weekly meetings until the show begins. The next meeting was set for Saturday, March 8 at 1:00 PM at Sarah O'Brien's home.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.